

Water Recreation Program

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June 1, 2008 is the Deadline for Barriers Compliance

Existing barriers, including fences, windows, doors, gates and walls surrounding the pool enclosure must comply with the revised code by June 1, 2008. Check www.doh.wa.gov/ehp/ts/WaterRec/pubs-water-rec.htm for detailed pictures in the Water Recreation Code WAC 246-260, as well as additional guidance documents. These barrier upgrades will save lives by preventing unsupervised children from getting into pools and spas.

Barriers at Pools not continuously Lifeguarded and associated with Residential Units

- Door and gate latches must be continuously locked, coded or have another equivalent access control system that always requires a key or code to enter the pool area when latches are placed below 60 inches above the ground. **Fact:** Fifty percent of children 7-1/2 years old can reach a latch at a 60 inch height.
- Doors and gates are not required to be continuously locked when latches are placed 60 inches or more above the ground. Consult with your local building department before raising latches to assure latch height does not create conflicts with Building Codes or The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). ADA may not allow a latch raised above 48 inches.
- Pool and spas without continual lifeguards must have self closing, self latching doors and gates. Immediately repair self closing and latching mechanisms that are not working.
- Pools associated with residential units must replace or retrofit existing fences less than 5 feet high. Pool barriers previously grandfathered must be retrofitted or replaced by June 1, 2008.
- General use pools and private clubs must replace or retrofit existing fences less than 6 feet high.

Barriers at All Pools

- Existing fences, gates, doors, and windows entering into the pool must not allow a 4 inch sphere to pass through. Modifications must be completed prior to the June 1, 2008 deadline.
Fact: 95% of children under the age of nine are able to get through a six inch opening in a fence.
- Chain link mesh size must not exceed 1-1/4 inch square. When the chain link exceeds 1-1/4 inch, slats must be provided to reduce mesh opening.
Fact: Children can easily climb chain link fences where larger openings allow for hand and foot holds.

The structural or designed horizontal members of the barrier must be greater than 45 inches apart or otherwise designed to prevent creating a ladder effect allowing unauthorized access into the facility.

Pump and Main Drain Safety Shut off Switches and Alarms Must be Installed by June 1, 2008

Existing swimming and wading pools with single main drains must have emergency equipment to shut off all pumps with alarms connected to the recirculation lines or other alternatives to the emergency shutoff switch and audible alarm installed by June 1, 2008.

Public Health plan review is not required for installation of an emergency shutoff and audible alarm switch, however, remodel or renovation of the main drain will require plan review. Please contact Public Health for plan review information or find it online at www.metrokc.gov/health/pools. Adding a second main drain with an approved antihair entrapment cover will significantly reduce the risk of evisceration/disembowelment, body suction entrapment, limb entrapment and hair entanglement.